Readex
MICROPRINT CORPORATION
150mm
6"

United Nations A/54/190/Add.1

General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 September 1999
English
Original: Arabic/English

Fifty-fourth session
Item 73 of the provisional agenda*
Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East

Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

Contents

		Page
III.	Replies received from Governments	2
	Egypt	2
	Iraq	3

* A/54/150.

99-26004 (E) 220999

III. Replies received from Governments

Egypt

[Original: English]
[7 September 1999]

1. Egypt's commitment to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is unquestionable. It was at the request of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Egypt that the item "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East" was first inscribed in the agenda of the General Assembly in 1974. Since that date, the Assembly has annually adopted a resolution, by consensus since 1980, on the matter. Throughout the years, Egypt has continued to play a consistently leading role in promoting the objective of ridding the Middle East of the threat of nuclear weapons.

2. As a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and a signatory to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, Egypt has clearly and unambiguously demonstrated its rejection of the nuclear option, which it considers represents a major threat to peace, security and stability in the Middle East. Today, Egypt notes that all States of the Middle East have become parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty with the exception of Israel, which regrettably persists in ignoring repeated calls to join the Treaty and to place all its nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency full-scope safeguards, thereby perpetuating a dangerous imbalance in the region.

3. Egypt is cognizant of the fact that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is a difficult task. Indeed, each region of the world has its own characteristics, and each zone must be tailored to suit those characteristics. However, Egypt does not share the view that full-scale peace and fully developed political and economic relations between all States of the region are a prerequisite for the commencement of negotiations on the establishment of a zone. If such an argument were correct, it is unlikely that the Treaty of Tlatelolco, or even the Treaty of Pelindaba, would ever have been negotiated. Regrettably, conflicts continue to rage in various parts of Africa to this very day, yet such conflicts were not invoked as reasons to prevent negotiations on an African nuclear-weapon-free zone. To Egypt, experience has shown that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in areas of tension and conflict does indeed contribute to easing tensions, preventing conflicts and developing peaceful relations and mutual cooperation.

4. For a nuclear-weapon-free zone to come about in any area of the world, there must inevitably exist a regional commitment to this objective. Such a commitment is unquestionably present in the Middle East, as testified to by the annual adoption of a consensus resolution of the General Assembly on the matter and by the recent adoption of consensus guidelines by the United Nations Disarmament Commission at its 1999 substantive session on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned. In this connection, Egypt notes with satisfaction that there is agreement that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East as well as the development of a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction, should be encouraged. Egypt considers that it is imperative that these commitments be turned into concrete actions if it is to have a determining and positive impact on the Middle East peace process.

5. Making negotiations on a Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone contingent upon an ever growing list of prerequisites is a sure recipe for failure. In Egypt's view, the only prerequisite for negotiations to commence on the establishment of a zone in the Middle East is that States in the region have the political will to sit together and commence negotiations. Viewing the Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone as no more than an act that "sets the seal on a durable peace" is not a vision that is shared by Egypt. A Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone is in and of itself an important confidence-building measure and an act of political reconciliation. Furthermore, arguing that fully fledged relations of peace must exist before talks on such a zone can commence, while at the same time persisting to maintain a nuclear option, clearly appear as two mutually exclusive and contradictory arguments. In a region as volatile as the Middle East no solid and durable peace can be achieved while a nuclear threat continues to loom over the region.

6. Egypt will continue to pursue the objective of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East at the earliest time and will, in this context, continue to seek the support of regional and extra-regional States. It will also pursue its April 1990 initiative for the establishment, in the Middle East, of a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction. In its endeavours, it will continue to seek the support of the international community and of all those who are committed to ridding the world, at both the regional and the global levels, of the threat of nuclear weapons.

Iraq

[Original: Arabic]
[23 August 1999]

1. Iraq welcomes the endeavours of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to further the implementation of General Assembly resolution 53/74 and previous resolutions related to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. It is clear that the first step towards achieving this aim must be for Israel to ratify the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to place its nuclear installations under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards, pursuant to paragraph 2 of resolution 53/74. Any discussion of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone before this step has been taken can only be productive of delay.

2. Iraq, as a member of the League of Arab States, fully subscribes to the provisions of the many resolutions adopted by the Council of the League concerning this issue, and in particular to the following points:

(a) Security and stability in the Middle East make it imperative to remove all weapons of mass destruction and to make it a region free of all nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, in accordance with paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991);

(b) The continuation of Israel's nuclear programme outside the international nuclear non-proliferation system, together with that country's refusal to ratify the Non-Proliferation Treaty or to place its nuclear installations under IAEA safeguards, constitute a threat to Arab national security and detract from the credibility and effectiveness of the Treaty. If the de facto situation of forcing all States in the region other than Israel to be subject to the non-proliferation system is maintained, there will be a dangerous and unacceptable imbalance that will threaten the security and stability of the region;

(c) The Security Council, which is responsible for maintaining international peace and security must be asked to ensure that all the provisions relating to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons are implemented universally and without the application of double standards, and must take the necessary measures to achieve this goal, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. It must also provide non-nuclear-weapon States with effective and comprehensive assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

3. In paragraph 7 of resolution 53/74, the General Assembly invited the nuclear-weapon States and all other States to render their assistance in the establishment of the zone and to refrain from any action that runs counter to both the letter and the spirit of the resolution. It is extremely unfortunate that the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, both permanent members of the Security Council, are ignoring their responsibilities with regard to the establishment of the zone. Furthermore, both those States have, since 1981, deliberately sought to obstruct any genuine effort to implement Security Council resolution 487 (1981), in which the Council called upon Israel to place its nuclear installations under IAEA safeguards. Since 1991, those two countries have also obstructed the implementation of paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991), adopted pursuant to Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, which states that the actions to be taken by Iraq represent steps towards the goal of establishing in the Middle East a zone free from weapons of mass destruction. The two aforementioned States are also deliberately attempting to destroy any consensus in the Preparatory Committee for the 2000 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. There are many proofs and indications of the continuing nuclear cooperation between Israel, the United States and the United Kingdom. The revelations with regard to the cargo of the El Al aircraft that crashed in an Amsterdam airport in 1992 make it clear that it was carrying chemical supplies and nuclear materials that were being transported from the United States to Israel.

4. The General Assembly, in the fifth preambular paragraph 6 of resolution 53/74, emphasized the need for appropriate measures on the question of the prohibition of military attacks on nuclear facilities. We believe that there is a pressing need for an international convention to outlaw such attacks. In 1981, Israel destroyed Iraq's nuclear facilities, which were devoted to peaceful purposes; nonetheless, Israel has escaped any punishment. This fact must make the international community give serious consideration to the aforementioned goal.